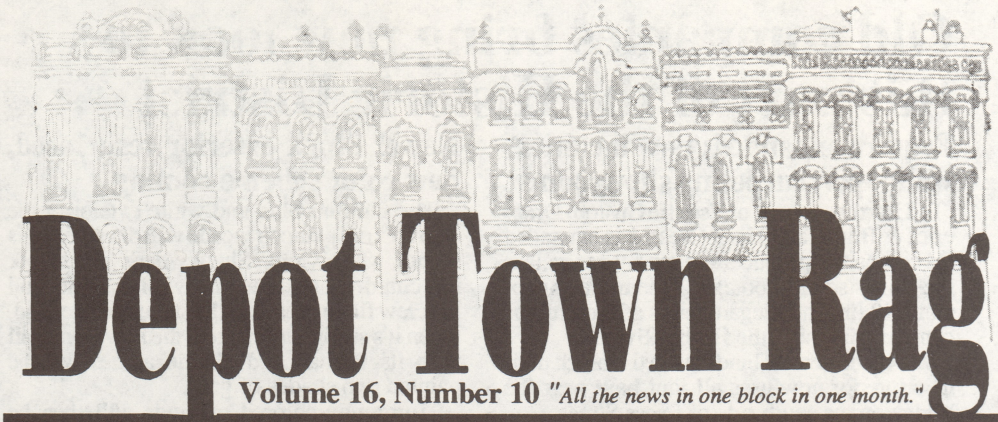


Depot Town Rag

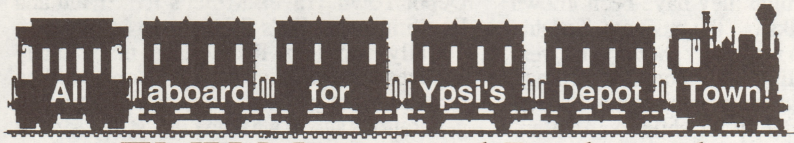
Volume 16, Number 10 *"All the news in one block in one month."*

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

100% FREE Rag Content
October 1993

- What's new in the old district?
- **Fall Fair events**
- **Michigan's oldest Mall Directory**
- Welcome, parents of EMU students

and other strictly local stuff. . . .



EMU Moms and Dads welcomed to Ypsilanti's old railroad district

This month will see bus loads of EMU parents coming to check out the old railroad district. Rather than just packing them off to school and sending them a check every now and then, they're exploring their kids' new environment for themselves. Such parental involvement seems a throwback to the good old days — except it's reversed.

Not many years ago, when they sent their daughters to the Michigan Normal School on the train, Mom and Dad warned them to hurry through the depot district to the safety of the wooded campus up the hill. Today's Depot Towners, immersed in the historic preservation ethic, love to tell that it's different now, when you live up over the store and send your baby off to school. It's a pretty sophisticated life on a big state university campus now, and we often take tours up there — just to be sure it's safe.

One local kid who cooked at the Old Town Restaurant likes to tell how his high school was farther away than his college campus when he was in undergrad school. When Ypsi High moved to the township, EMU became the closest school to Depot Town and it was truly a hometown experience. Today he has an office in Old Town Hall and has his own place 'up over the store' in Depot Town. It's an ancient tradition.

Fully half of today's forty entrepreneurs on this block were EMU students or faculty, themselves, and saw the old railroad district as a place to try their ideas on the rest of the world. The rest are 'Townies' who probably never got their term papers done on time.

Out-of-towners enrolled at EMU often find the ambience of this old district to be one of the 'roots' that was missing in their earlier education. When you grow up in a suburban subdivision, the entreprenural life of a nineteenth commercial district can seem distant and foreign. Familiarity with the old values of this block often exposes themes for college papers, fertile ground for hands-on projects, alternative living arrangements and even employment.

Depot Town's merchants welcome today's new EMU families back to one of the oldest shopping malls in the Northwest Territory.

College kids spotted in town on summer holiday!

Imagine the surprise of local yokels when, upon driving up the hill toward the campus on the Fourth of July, at least a dozen EMU students were seen tossing frisbees in front of a fraternity house! It's a sight not often seen here for three - maybe more - reasons:

1. It's the weekend.
2. It's a holiday, too.
3. It's in the midst of summer break.

or

4. They'd missed the bus to Saugatuck, were out of money, and has lost their ID.

Only David Letterman could give us seven more good reasons why these folks were still in Ypsilanti, but maybe they stayed here because they liked it.

At right is the local point of view on why so many Huron/Eagles still make their nests in the old railroad district on weekends...

Top Ten reasons to stay in Ypsi on the weekend:

10. Your work release program gives college credit now.
9. You can charge it until the Western Union Money-Gram comes in.
8. When you wake up late, you can just turn over and sleep another 48 hours until your next eight o'clock.
7. Your clothes were still in the dryer.
6. The grad school Preservation Program is taking the subject out of the classroom.
5. You're doing field work on strip malls and used clothing scams in your pick-up.
4. Your honey thinks you're at Michigan.
3. Your other honey thinks you go to Wayne State!
2. You don't want to miss anything at the local barber shops.
1. There's just too much going on in Depot Town to miss!

Officers elected at annual meeting

September 16th's annual meeting of the Depot Town Association, Inc. saw the following slate accepted by the membership:

President, Judi Monaghan, long-time resident and promoter of the district, a staff member at the National Sanitary Foundation where she manages the Water Additives Toxicology Department.

President-elect, Tommy Steele, co-owner of the Daily Grind and owner of Ann Arbor's Applause Salon.

Bettie Dodd, re-elected treasurer, is on the staff at Hon's Flowers.

Secretary, Tom Dodd, editor of the *The Depot Town Rag* and teacher at Ann Arbor's Community High and University of Michigan Dearborn.

The October21 DTA meeting will include the annual prioritizing of projects and promotions for the good of the district.

EMU DEPOT TOWN

Student work published here:

What to do with all those tedious papers that must be written by final exam week? Get them published in *The Depot Town Rag* and add that classy accomplishment to your growing resumé!

It's not true that you have to write on boring topics to get a degree today. As a practical matter of fact, there's plenty to study and report on in that little railroad district just down the hill from the campus.

The recent history of this block has seen college student projects centering on this district which proposed closing the street for a mall-like effect - as well as countless student proposals for turning the old Michigan Central depot into anything but a railroad depot!

Regular *Rag* readers love to see their neighborhood with a fresh eye, and the ever-changing student body on the EMU campus certainly can give the old district a new outlook on the future.

New district T-shirt introduced, meets rave reviews at Festival

Depot Town T-shirts have become a cult collectors item in the last two decades - and the most recent incarnation of the above design nearly sold out at its debut in the Jazz Competiton tent in August.

Pam Hamblin spearheaded this version of the neighborhood on quality cotton and she reports only a few of the first edition remaining at the counters of district businesses.

Pam took the design from the Follett House west wall to Elmo's Supershirts of Ann Arbor and Elmo, who's done several generations of Depot Town promotional material, put out a primary color combination that's both railroadiana-esque and boldly beautiful for contemporary boosters of the block.

Old companies bring new look to this part of the Historic District

Esquire expanded; now includes wallpaper, carpeting showrooms

Ted Barron, owner, of Esquire Custom Draperies & Blinds at 10 East Cross, has expanded his company's products and services as well as the shop's square footage. One more expansion will find this elegant series of showrooms cantilevering over the Huron River.

One of the newest buidings in the block their new interior now uses all four bays near the bridge on the south side of Cross Street.

In addition to the fine draperies and window treatments for which they have been known even since his folks ran the business, Ted and company added a wallpaper showroom a year ago - and a carpeting showroom this summer. The newly up-graded interior winds its way from from one delightful showroom to another, creating a perfect environment for planning home decorating.

Newel Block exterior resurfaced, new color scheme coming

The familiar blue and white exteior of the district's only stucco facade will disappear this month when Craig Shankwiler's patchwork has cured. Late summer saw Shankwiler and his crew fill in breaks in the stucco surface and, when it's sufficiently cured, the new front wall with its Roman and Gothic arches will be painted two shades of gray.

Burgundy-colored awnings will then be added over the three shops at ground level: Depot Town Travel, Miller's Ice Cream and Emporium and Ike's Barbershop.

Sally and Rex Richiehave made many changes inside and out of this historic building through their years of ownship. Just a few generations ago, it was the biggest department store in town: Davis & Company. Mr. Davis would be proud to see it today.

Eight fun-filled days and seven glorious nights - - but not down in Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town

Confessions of a travel writer:

For 20 years, I have been subjected to a continuing barrage of travel magazines, Sunday travel sections, lurid brochures and jam-packed itineraries. Using these for reference, I have contributed to the confusion myself, cranking out hundreds of titillating filmscripts and tantalizing mailings extolling the virutes of more destinations than I'll ever see.

Everything was going well until, a few years ago, I started traveling -- actually visiting these places and experiencing first-hand the "never-to-be-forgotten adventure-of-a-lifetime in exotic (your country here).

My travels have opened my eyes. I confess I have been reckless with the truth.

I'm sure you've seen my work. I'm the guy who told you how your overnight transatlantic flight to Europe would end: "As the morning sun filters gently through your cabin window, you are awakened by the delicate aroma of freshly brewed coffee being served by your smiling attendant."

Something closer to the truth might have read: "Exhausted and queasy from too much liquid and too little sleep, you are startled into wakefulness by the blinding sun and the acrid smell of coffee mixing with the brewery atmosphere of the cabin."

No more lies. No more "...racing the sun across the Atlantic" to describe the irreparable damage you do to your body clock upon returing to the U.S. No more "specialty of the house" to cover the fact that you can't order from the menu. No more "cozy" for tiny, "stately" for over-the-hill or "relaxing" for boring.

Here, for your edification (or to confirm your darkest suspicions) are some of the most widely-used euphemisms in the travel literature business today, together with what I have discovered to be their best approximate English translations. I offer them to you as a public service -- and in expiation for my past transgressions.

All the amenities (Palmolive soap)
Aristocratic
(Formerly nice, now getting seedy)
Carefree natives (Terrible service)
Bustling metropolis
(Thousands of hostile locals)
Open bar (All the ice cubes you want)
Plush (Top and bottom sheets)
Spacious quarters
(Sparsely-furnished room)
Surprising bargains
(Hollowed-coconut birdfeeders)
Deluxe motorcoach
(Bus with clean windows)
Quaint (Run down)
Warmed by the Gulf Stream (Cold)
Cooled by the Humboldt Current (Hot)
Off-the-beaten-path
(People have stopped coming here)
Standard (Substandard)
Deluxe (Standard)
Superior (Nice)
Undiscovered (Not worth discovering)
Convenient (Bring bus fare)
Playground of the Stars
(Regis Toomey once stayed here)
Tree-lined boulevards (No sightseeing)
Old World charm (No bath)
Carriage trade (No kids or pets)
Authentic native dishes
(Don't drink the water)
Options galore
(Nothing is included in itinerary)
...and much, much more
(That's about all there is)
...too numerous to mention
(The writer has never been there)
Pre-registered rooms (Already occupied)
Explore on your own (Pay for it yourself)
Luxurious (Tolerable)
Steeped in history (Old; backwards)
Tipping is considered an insult
(They love to be insulted)

(Stay right here in Depot Town, instead! Or check out realities at our new travel agency.)

MURDER ON OPENING NIGHT

October 22, 23, 29 & 30

World premiere of a murder mystery farce by local playwright Teddy Ostrow.

The obnoxious and untalented grande dame of a community theater group is found dead in her dressing room!

Whodunnit?

Audience members can hone their sleuthing skills while enjoying a buffet dinner w/ dessert & coffee.

Seating is limited, so reserve early to avoid disappointment.

7 pm, St. Luke's Episcopal Church,
120 N. Huron St. (just north of Pearl St.), Ypsilanti
Tickets $20 in advance and at the door
434-5593 • 434-4555 • 434-3289

Depot Doo

Fine Design in Hair Style

25 East Cross • 484-3045

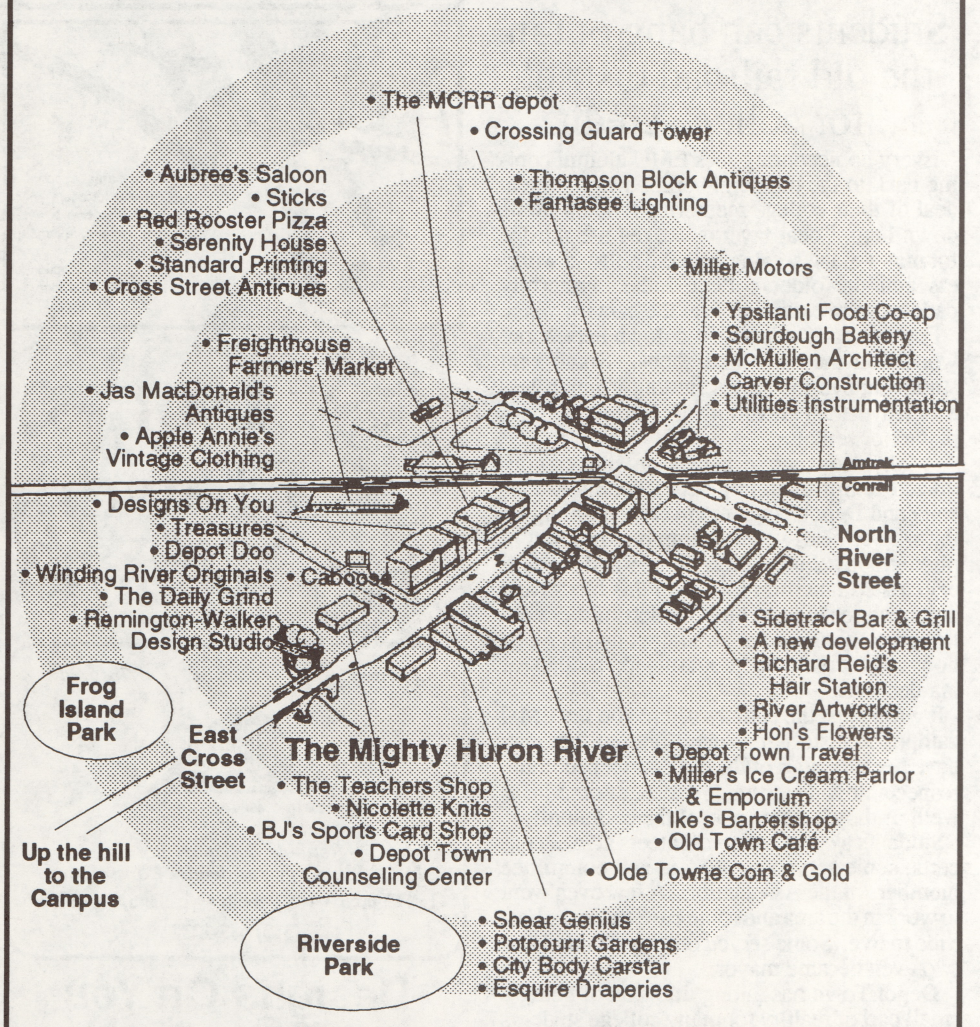
Membership 1/2 off!
$5 month of October:
Co-op Month

Sun. 12-5, M,T,Th, F 10-8 Wed. 10-9 Sat. 9-8
312 N. RIVER ST. 483-1520

Ypsilanti's historic Depot Town

1993 DIRECTORY

Food and drink like you can't find at the mall.
Service like the good old days are here again!



Hair cuts and bump shops; saloons and salons.
Antiques and Hudsons; artists and jazz!

Depot Town *is* what America *was*!

Ypsilanti's FARMERS' MARKET

1993 FALL FAIR

Sat. 2 October

Fall farm harvests!
fireside Heritage Crafters!

- Scarecrow gallery
- Art's 'n' Crafts show
- Humungus Vegi contest!
  w/$25 first prize!
- Hay jump
- Story Time on the Farm Wagon
- Pie-eating contest for kids
- Nature Crafts projects
- Foot-Stompin' music
- Sweet Cider & Donuts

- call 483-1480 for information.

Market Hours:
Wednesday and Saturday 7am - 3pm
Open year 'round
in the railroad freighthouse
Ample Free Parking
Live music every Saturday am
For information: 483-1480

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- Nerves stress

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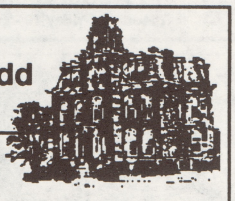
If you have never been to a chiropractor, *call us.*
If you've been but with no results, *call us.*

485-2120

Bring in this ad and we will give you and your insurance company $25 off your first visit.

324 Miles Street • Ypsilanti,

Gregory L. Dodd
Attorney at Law



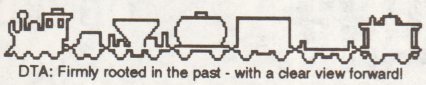
- Family Law
- Criminal Law
- Probate, Wills, and Trusts
- Personal Injury

300 N. Huron, Ypsilanti MI 48197
313-487-2611

FOREST AVENUE BAPTIST

218 E. Forest Avenue, Ypsilanti 483-6216
COMMON GROUND and **ON THE EDGE**
A Christian Ministry for EMU, MSU, Cleary and WCC
Students and Single Career Adults
For more information call Doug at 483-6216
• Weekly Bible studies and monthly activities planned •

Depot Town Association, Inc., 16 September 1993



DTA: Firmly rooted in the past - with a clear view forward!

The Annual Meeting of the Depot Town Association, Inc. was chaired by President-elect Judi Monaghan.

The minutes of the August meeting were changed to correct the spelling of John Underhill's name. Sorry, John.

The treasury currently holds $8941.97.

- June's Frog Island program book shows $1300 profit with one advertiser still outstanding. Pledges were made to begin a sales campaign earlier next year and expand to the eager Ann Arbor market.

- August's Heritage Competiton costs are not all in yet; a final report is expected at the October 21 meeting. Security and Visitors & Convention Bureau are not yet paid off.

T-shirt sales show on 18 of the original ten dozen still on the street. All are XXL for $12 each and can be found at Daily Grind, Miller's Ice Cream, Aubree's Saloon and River Artworks. Shall we do an extra run of the new Depot Town design? Decide at the November meeting.

Rag Report: Several new advertisers this month with a special focus upon the EMU parents' tour which will highlight the district in their bus tours this month.

Parking hours approved at September's meeting were posted by 8:30 the next morning, thanks to our Ward Five councilmembers: V. Lois Wells and Pam Cuthbert. Many thanks for the efficient response on the part of the City of Ypsilanti.

Market Meeting: Fall Fair is scheduled for Saturday, October 2. Victorian Holiday is scheduled to kick off there on December 4.

Caboose renovation is not yet complete with folks standing in line to rent it again for private parties and other functions. Maybe it will be ready for the Fall Fair?

Kiosk updates for new businesses will be made by the Association to encourage those businesses to join and support the only organization which supports them, exclusively.

Monthly DTA meetings may go back to the old tradition of meeting in a different local business beginning this winter. Discuss, propose and invite at the October meeting.

Troop 240 of St. John's Catholic Church did an excellent community service in cleaning up the Market Plaza in mid-August. Many thanks to the Scouts and their leaders. A note has been sent, thanking them from the entire district.

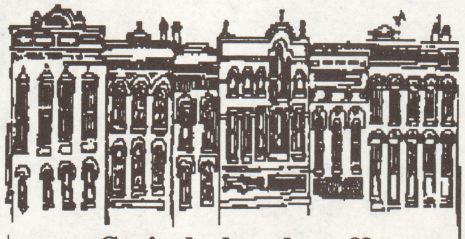
An Eastern Michigan University class on historic preservation has taken on the task of nominating the 100+ year-old **Freighthouse to the Michigan Historical Register.** "Friends of the Freighhouse" will be soliciting history and information about that building this fall.

Annual Election of officers:

President, Judi Monaghan
President-elect, Tommy Steele
Treasurer, Bettie Dodd
Secretary, Tom Dodd

(More information on the four officers is on page one.)

Next DTA meeting: 7:30 pm, Thursday, 21 October, at the Daily Grind. President-elect Tommy Steele will provide complimentary coffee and dessert.



Strictly local stuff:

October1993

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

1993 Fall Fair
All day Saturday, October 2
in the Market Plaza and the Frieighthouse

Depot Town Association
7:30 p.m. Thursday, 21
at the Daily Grind w/ coffee & dessert

Depot Town Antique Engine Club
7:30 pm Thursday, 28
at the Freighthouse

Victorian Holiday
All day Saturday, December 4
Farmers' Market & throughtout the district

Festival of Lights
Every night from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve
In Riverside Park

THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

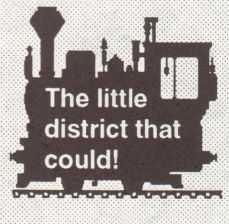
The Depot Town Association, Inc.
Judi A. Monaghan, president
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Please include me among the members of

Guarantee
Your support makes a difference!

The Depot Town Association, Inc.

Name _____
Street _____
City_____State_____ZIP _____



Annual dues:
- ❑ $25 Regular Member (Property or business owner)
- ❑ $10 Associate Member (Interested in and supportive)
- ❑ $100 Life Member (A great deal if you had joined in 1976!)
- ❑ Please place my name on the monthly mailing list of *The Depot Town Rag*
- ❑ Don't mail *The Rag.* I'll pick it up in the neighborhood.
- ✂ Clip and send check to "Depot Town Association" c/o The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Stick it in *The Rag*

for only $10 month.

You can't get any more local than this!
Send your copy to The Old Caboose by the 3rd Thursday and you'll see your ad here the following month.

Many payment plans. Trust us.

The Depot Town Rag:
All the news in one block in one month

SUPPORT OUR MERCHANTS WHO SUPPORT *THE RAG*

Aubree's
SALOON
35 East Cross Street
Since 1873

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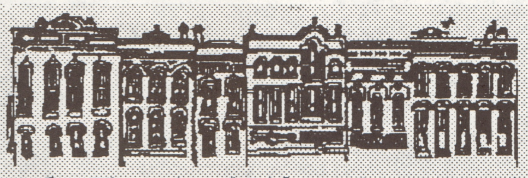
Standard Printing

- ✻ Resumes
- ✻ Letterheads
- ✻ Envelopes
- ✻ Business Cards

(313) 483-0339
35 E. Cross Street ✦ Ypsilanti, Michigan
Historic Depot Town

Dateline: Depot Town:



A Neighborhood Forgotten by Time (and Life and Newsweek)

Remington-Walker Design Studio moves and expands

Watch for an even larger display of some of the most elegant Victorian home decor to be found anywhere - in R/W's new home two and three doors west of their original location. Sandy Hoag and Midge Prybyla have carried their unique business into the two western bays of the historic Follett House and now boast one of the most delightful corner display windows in the area.

Just one year after their successful beginning, Sandy and Midge felt the need to expand their showroom space and to increase their volume to meet the demand they had created with this unusual combination of hand-made items, quality crafts and antiques selected by Tom Schmidt.

Extensive holiday plans are now under way.

Gallery opens

Winding River Originals has moved into 23 East Cross and displays for sale fine arts, quality crafts and antiques. Space is also provided for artists to set up their own displays of recent work. Both interior displays and window spaces are available for exhibits.

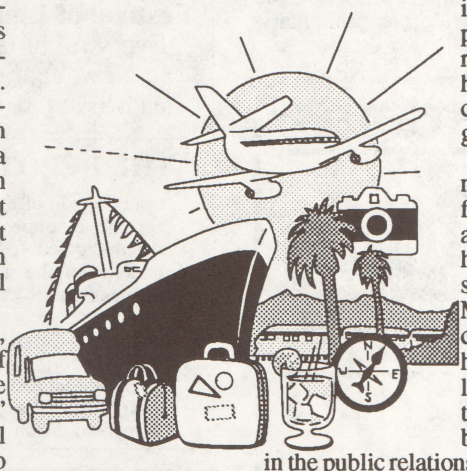
Karen Brenner, director of the gallery, says, "If someone is willing to work in the store for one day a week, there is no consignment charge (percentage)... I will also take individual pieces on a percentage-only basis."

Her plan is to provide a continuously changing display of arts, crafts and antiques and she's eager to reply to interested parties. Call Karen at 483-5438.

One of Brenner's first sales is the gorgeous lamp which sits in the window at Ypsilanti's new bed and breakfast: Parish House on South Huron Street.

Depot Town Travel provides a way out

It was bound to happen: After so many years of everybody wanting to visit Depot Town as a tourist attraction, somebody from the neighborhood would want to find a way to get away from here. Beginning this month, Depot Town Travel is filling that need.



Not only is the old district a destination but, as of this month, it's a departure point, as well. Miller's Ice Cream Parlor & Emporium's Gwen Blackmer has formed a new partnership with Ardi Everard in Depot Town Travel at 44 East Cross Street with a wealth of both local and global experience.

Ardi's a very local kid, too, being a graduate of Roosevelt School and the daughter of Alton "Red" Allison who had the Shell gas station right next to the water tower for thirty years. Her father-in-law, Dick Everard, had a Gulf station and radio/TV shop on the corner of Prospect and Clark. Two aunts, retired from the public schools, live on Olive Street and her husband's also a cousin of Linda Fulford Gault at Potpourri Gardens. That's life in a small town!

Ardi remembers coming to Depot Town as a child to buy red ribbons at the dry goods store in what is today the east dining room of the Old Town Café.

Gwen and Ardi bring a total of 29 years experience in the travel business to their new venture. Along with that, they've operated Junior football food conscessions and traveled to places even more exotic than Ypsi's Depot Town between them: Hawaii, Alaska, Africa, Greece, Bermuda, and countless others. In the midst of all that there was the Miller's venture.

Joining Gwen and Ardi in the new venture is Rebecca Schaufele, of Whitmore Lake, who was trained in the State of Michigan's EDGE program to be a career travel consultant. So successful was Rebecca, that she was asked to be her class's graduation speaker and has been invited back as their most promising graduate. She received eight awards for her participation and excellence in the EDGE program.

Even with adding three new folks to the local work force, Gwen will be hiring a replacement for some of her hours at Miller's. "I'll still keep a hand in (the Miller's business) with catering and probably have to help out with the lunch traffic from time to time," says Gwen. Husband, Dave Blackmer, aids in the public relations for both businesses, and is the past president of the Depot Town Association.

Their elegant new office is a tasteful combination of burgundy, mauve and country blue with Queen Anne furnishings not often seen in this old railroad district. Peeking through the oval door window at Heritage Festival gave a preview of their well-appointed interior digs. This summer's preparations included an inspection by a federal agency, the Airline Reporting Corporation (ARC), which replaced the Air Traffic Control agency to regulate the industry. Gwen and Ardi's new enterprise also belongs to the American Society of Travel Agents.

Owners of the building, Rex and Sally Richie, have recently received HDC approval for repainting the entire exterior of the building and new awnings are expected to follow.

How to succeed on campus this semester:

• **Sit in the front row of every class.** Make eye contact. Whenever the prof says something positive, nod your head; shake your head from side to side at the onset of negative observations on her or his part. You don't have to actually listen to each lecture; the intonation will graphically point out the positive/negatives for your response.

It's a fact that front row sitters get better grades than back row sitters.

• **Always raise your hand.** It doesn't matter what the question was, just be prepared to answer. If, by some quirk of fate, you should be called upon, feign lack of memory: "Would you mind repeating the question, please?" If, after hearing the 'real question,' you find you have no idea what is being discussed, excuse yourself and ask to be called on at another time.

"Why do we always see the same hands?" is a typical professor's lament. After a while they'll stop calling on you, anyway.

• **Carry that professor's book on top** when entering and leaving class. Don't read it. Just carry it.

• **State your name** in every way possible. Write it large on the top of every paper handed in. State your name in conversation with your professors. Wear a name tag. Have grandma knit your name into the front (or back) of a sweater for you. Above all, don't be unknown by mid-term. Set out to be either the 'best' or 'worst' in the class. Remember the horrors of the bell-shaped curve and just don't fall into that big, anonymous group in the middle.

• **State your name** the way it's going to be on the transcript. Don't be Muffy or Biff in class. If you changed your name in Freshman year to Moon Cloud, be sure it's that way on the official record.

• **Talk loud.** Don't mumble in class. Even if you're talking to someone else on another topic, shout it out. If, perchance, you're addressing the entire class (preferably on a topic introduced by the teacher) be sure to be obnoxiously loud. Smile a lot, too, and maybe even wink at the rest of the class when you turn your head away from the professor.

• **If you're ever tardy** (heaven forbid!) be quick to interrupt and complain that you had to wait in line at the local bookstore for an hour and a half to buy your copy of the book the professor has just had published. And don't smile. Leave that up to the professor!

Hottest little corner bar & grill in town!

Rated best burgers! - *Detroit Monthly*

SIDETRACK Bar & Grill

• 8 beers on draught

Ypsilanti's Hottest Bar!

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Telephone: 482-4732
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Security through insurance since 1921

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A Depot Town SAMPLER

Students can hang out in the old railroad district ...for college credit

Every homecoming sees EMU alumni coming back to the old neighborhood as if a great deal of their college memories found a home down here. Local taverns walked a tightrope for many years, serving both the railroad workers and the older college kids. Fraternity paddles were exhibited over the bars for years.

Few college students lived down here; more worked in the cafés and shops. Some kept studios above the stores finding it much less expensive than travelling to Europe to be a painter or sculptor.

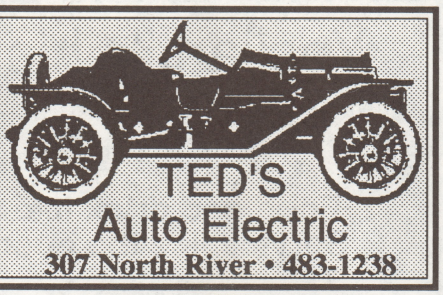
Many more wrote papers on studies conducted in this charming little slice of Americana and Depot Town environs were hung on the wall of nearly every campus exhibition of photography. Future city planners and promoters created fanciful projects in this block, and architecture students built models of these old Italianate commercial structures and showed how they could be modernized, malled or mauled over.

It wasn't just the courses offered on the EMU campus in historic preservation, but that may have been the start of the old district becoming respectable and worth some academic credit, as well, as they became part of the community.

Students were regular volunteers at jazz concerts; some served as officers and committee members of the Association. A few even went to work in the area and came back to Ypsi's East Side to live. Some served on City Council and two even became mayor.

Depot Town has a long tradition of being a small part of realilty for many college students up the hill and, if they'll behave themselves enough to pass for a traditional railroader, they're welcome to come down to the old railroad district and act like they own the place - just like the rest of the locals.

And their parents are welcome to come back to the good old days and tell about the history of the railroads, too. It's a tradition anyone can help to hang on to. Welcome to Depot Town!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